

PERSPECTIVES

The AmeriCorps Accessible Transportation Project Newsletter

November/December 2010



A Message from the Project Director

The journey is the reward
~Chinese Proverb

When you began this AmeriCorps journey, you might have been scared. I was too. I took over this post in August and that seems so long ago now. My life has changed dramatically. It's really no secret why. But I've found that through the ups and downs of having a baby in the hospital, I've found a calming solace in coming to work and knowing that I have an amazing team that is making a difference, even if sometimes we don't have all the answers quite yet.

On the last day of pre-service orientation, one of the last exercises we did at around 4:30 p.m., was to sit in silence and reflect on the previous two days' experience. I sat and thought about the training, the upcoming year, and all of the members. I felt optimistic and brave. It was the exercise I had looked forward to all day. Peace and reflection.

When we convened and said our goodbyes, I packed up, loaded up my car, and then made my way to the hospital to be with my son. On the way, I noticed that I had missed phone calls. My heart sunk as I heard the voicemail from the doctor explaining that my son had come down with what would later be diagnosed as pneumonia and needed to be sedated and put on a ventilator. The time of the missed call was right around 4:30 p.m. I began to think, "I was just sitting there doing nothing when I could have been there for my son. I *should* have been there." Later, I told one of the nurses these feelings I was having. She explained, "What if you had answered the phone call, heard the message, gotten in your car, and been in an accident? *Sometimes you are where you are because that's where you're meant to be.*"

Sometimes our journey takes us in a direction that we didn't anticipate. We can't predict where it will go. My hope is that the journey that you're on will help find solutions for not only the people you're serving, but for you as well. I look forward to hearing about your reflections and how you've been shaped by this journey.

~Monique

*Legacy –
Remember to always ask yourself, "How am I making my project sustainable past the funding period by another agency? Who are my partners?"*

News You Can Use

Getting the word out –

Publicizing your projects in the media

During the Pre-Service Orientation, we didn't get a chance to go over effective media relations.

However, there is a section in your member handbook (tab 12) that goes over how to interact with your local media to publicize your projects. The section includes a sample press release. I would highly encourage you to consider sending press releases (when appropriate and with the approval of your supervisor) with a follow-up call to your local media. You might also put together press kits for the media. Press kits can include a brochure, press release and something more "tangible," like an AmeriCorps sticker or button, so when they see it sitting on their desk, they'll think of you.

Deliver the press kit in person and introduce yourself. Always be considerate of the reporter's time (and make sure you're talking to the right person). For example, you want to talk to the community reporter rather than the crime beat reporter. If you get published, make sure you keep clippings of the articles and send copies to me (Monique) so I can forward a copy to Serve Idaho.



Bill Knowlden and Amanda Goodwin are sworn in as AmeriCorps members



Renee Cox, Kelli Staskey and Robbi Barrutia present Ted Roy (center right) with his AmeriCorps certificate.



Renee Cox, Kelli Staskey and Robbi Barrutia present Nancy Hoobler (center right) with her AmeriCorps certificate.

Collaboration Meetings

Serve Idaho will be sending out a list of AmeriCorps members throughout Idaho. Please feel free to use this as an opportunity to interact and collaborate on projects with your fellow members. Treasure Valley AmeriCorps members working on the Accessible Transportation Project have set up an ongoing meeting. If you have set up a meeting in your area with other AmeriCorps members that you would like to publicize, let me know so I can put it in this newsletter.

Quarter Time Members

Quarter Time AmeriCorps Members serve 450 hours and receive a \$1,468 education award upon successful completion of their hours. We have 11 slots available for quarter time members (one for each of you to recruit). In order to recruit a quarter time member, you must have a job description approved by your supervisor.

The process for the potential candidate to apply to become an AmeriCorps quarter-time member is the same process you went through. That is, they must go to www.americorps.gov and apply online. They must undergo a background check and you and your host-site supervisor must have done an interview with the candidate. Please contact me (Monique) once you have your candidate identified and I can walk you through the process.

Updates

Progress Report

Attached to this newsletter is the updated quarterly progress report, which is due January 7, 2011. Please take the time to review the questions. You must begin tracking demographics so you are prepared to answer the questions in January. The progress report is important because it delivers valuable information to stakeholders, like Serve Idaho, the SILC, and the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities, as well as provides you a gauge by which to measure your achievement. Let me (Monique) know if you have any questions about completing the progress report.

*** Please remember to replace this quarterly progress report with the one that is currently in your Member Handbook under Tab 7. The previous progress report template will not be accepted.**

Care Packages

Each of you should have received a package from me (Monique) recently. It included envelopes. Those envelopes should accompany the AmeriCorps note cards you received at Pre-Service Orientation. You also should have received other AmeriCorps goodies like stickers, pins, and bookmarks. Feel free to distribute as you see fit. Let me know if you need more of anything and I'll try to get you what you need.

*I will get things done for America – to make our people safer, smarter, and healthier.
I will bring Americans together to strengthen our communities. Faced with apathy, I will take action.
Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground. Faced with adversity, I will persevere.
I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond.
I am an AmeriCorps member, and I will get things done.*

Open Slots Available

We currently have the following AmeriCorps Member positions available. If you know anyone who may be interested in either of these, please refer them to Monique.

- Full time AmeriCorps Accessible Transportation Advocate, Idaho Falls
- Quarter time AmeriCorps IT Mobility Website Intern for Valley Ride Transit, Boise

In addition, we have one more full time position that we are seeking to place at an agency. If you know an agency that would benefit from an AmeriCorps member, please contact Monique.

Marketing Blitz

Be on the lookout for an Accessible Transportation Network website which will allow all of us to market our projects. My vision is that it will also allow members to have their reflection blogs, photos, and videos.

Tours around the State

I will be scheduling a stakeholder tour around the state to visit each of your sites. Once you are more familiar with your projects, let me know when would be a good time for us to visit your site. I envision taking a few people with me (from various agencies) to your location so we can see what you're doing.

Get your story in the newsletter

If you'd like to see your project or story here, just send your idea, story or photo to Monique.

Deadlines and Calendar Items

November 10, 2010 (1 to 3:30 p.m. MST): Governor's Brightest Stars Volunteer Opportunity. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Monique.

November 11, 2010: Veteran's Day. SILC office is closed.

November 15, 2010: This is an updated deadline. Have Service Project dates identified and sent to me. Remember, before you conduct a service project, you MUST fill out the Service Project Request Form in your Member Handbook, under Tab 4.

November 18, 2010 (3:30 p.m. MST): Monthly Team Meeting call-in. Call-in instructions will be sent ahead of time.

November 22, 2010: Accessibility Questionnaire must be filled out (I emailed this to you) and sent to Monique. Please use the tape measure you received at PSO to complete it.

December 7, 2010: ADA Basics Online Course must be completed. Please send certificate of completion to Monique.

December 16, 2010 (3:30 p.m. MST): Monthly Team Meeting call-in. Call-in instructions will be sent ahead of time.

December 31, 2010: CPR Certification must be achieved. Please send a copy of your certification to Monique.

"Be the change you want to see in the world."

~Ghandi